HEZEKIAH OLDBOTTOM

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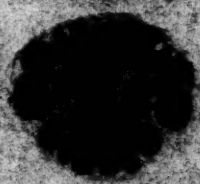
TO

JOSHUA PYM.



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HEZEKIAH OLDBOTTOM

TO

JOSHUA PYM.

Friend Joshua,

DIONYSIUS not being in the Way, and it not being probable, though he were, that he would answer thy Letter, I sit me down, being disengaged from better Business, to say a few Words unto thee. I must tell thee, in the first Place, that thy Paper sold well; for many of our Friends purchased great Numbers of them to disperse into the Country, as a Sample of the Sentiments of thy Masters, and to let the People see the Soundness of thy Cause, and the Abilities of those who are paid to support it. Verily, I say the Truth, and, to feed thy Vanity still farther, I will assure thee, thy Performance hath afforded much Matter of Diversion.

I mix not much in the great World, nor doth the Business of my Calling permit me to spend Time in trifling Inquiries; for this Reason I know not what real Name the Publick giveth thee; but, I can say for myself, I think I know thee; I have seen thy Face in Company, and I fancy I see it on thy Paper; it hath the Air of a Wit, but the Features of a Buffoon; the Acrimony of thy Nature, not the Salt of thy Genius, hath given Savour to thy Expressions, and drew on thee an Attention which thee swallowed as Applause. I have sat in Company with thee, and have pitied

thy Situation, whilſt I abhorred thy Perſon; it was thy Profeſſion to be comical, and thou ſeemedſt in continual Fear of loſing thy Fame; I have looked in thy Eyes, and ſeen thee rummaging for Wit; I have ſeen thy Features ſtraining for a Joke, as for a Neceſſity of Nature. To relieve thyſelf, thou haſt ſometimes ventured to digreſs into Seriouſneſs; but it was not for thy Turn; Judgment had never been thy Help-mate, and thou hadſt been too long unacquainted with the Ways of Truth to trace her to her Habitation.

Indifferent as thou art in this Character, yet art thou worſe upon Paper. Thy Maſters are fitted to thee, ſo are thy Fellow-Servants, ſo is likewiſe thy Cauſe; but thee are not equal to its Defence: This, indeed, is not to be expected from thee, nor from any other beſide; for it is not to be defended: FACTS, my good Friend, ſpeak too loud not to be heard, and too plain not to be underſtood; their Voice is too ſtrong for thee, yea, and for all the united Levee; nor are the Freemen of this Country the dull Beaſts thou doſt ſeem to ſuppoſe them. This, hadſt thou Senſe, thou mightſt long ſince have perceived; why then wouldſt thou attempt ſo vain a Work? Why wouldſt thou preſume upon a Talent, which, were it good in its Kind, is not adapted to the Purpoſe? It is true, thou haſt every Aſſiſtance which thy Wit requires; it is foſtered by Smiles, enlivened by Expectation, and cheriſhed with good Fare; thy Tabernacle is at Eaſe, and thou jokeſt not well but on a full Belly; but what doth all this avail? Be thy Sauce ever ſo high, or thy Wine ever ſo rich, thy Wit will never have Effect on this People; a Jeſt is but inſipid to Perſons highly aggrieved, Half-Arguments, like thine, but confirm their Reſolution, and Scurrility but adds to their Reſentment. Thou wilt ſay we are ſullen; perhaps ſo; thank thy Maſters for that, for it is they have put us out of all Humour for joking.

But to come home to thy Letter; it ſeemeth to have two diſtinct Purpoſes; to ſet DIONYSIUS againſt his Friends, and the People againſt both. Thou Fool! is this a Time for either? Hath it not been the Work of four Years to divide the Country from its Friends, and are they not more firmly rivetted than ever? How many Brains have been tortured, how much Pains and Expence have been employed, to effect it? And what can thy poor Pen do but add to our Conviction of our Danger? Thou ſheweſt us it is the Wiſh of thy Patrons that we ſhould be divided; and who wiſheth to divide, but he who meaneth to deſtroy?

DIONYSIUS hath been unpolite, thou ſayeſt, in not paying perſonal Compliment; thou haſt, in Truth, ſhewn much Politeneſs in thy Manner of telling him ſo; thy Party hath ever preached Politeneſs; but verily I have ſeen but bad Examples among

among them; we heard of nothing elſe during the Time of the laſt Ruler, nor was there any End to reproach for our Ill-Manners; yet, in Truth, the Politeneſs was confined to the Crown; for the People were but ſcurvily treated. Ye are Courtiers it is true, and ſhould be polite; DIONYSIUS is not one, and ſhould therefore be indulged; what Buſineſs could he have among his Betters, or what Delight could ye have reaped from his uncourtly Company? Is his Abſence the Cauſe of Quarrel? Verily, ye love him mightily; or is it owing to the ungrateful Truths which he hath written in the News-Paper? Adviſe thy Maſters to tread right, and his Words hurt them not; but why wilt thou be angry if his Sayings do not fit them? Ye do not love him, and yet, in Truth, I think ye ſhould; for he hath done the Office of a Friend in pointing out the Rocks, and ſhewing where the Mighty have periſhed.

Thou chargeſt him with being an Incendiary; produce thy Proofs; for we know them not. Hath not his Detail been ever confined to wicked Miniſters? In what Place doth he even inſinuate any Thing to the Prejudice of the King? On the contrary, do not all his Writings tend to the Honour and Intereſts of him and his Succeſſion? But perhaps thou wilt ſay, that to abuſe the Servants is to abuſe the Maſter; alas! we were told ſo an hundred Years ago, and have not yet been brought to believe it; we are ſtupid, and cannot be reclaimed. Or, peradventure, thee may aſſert that we have no bad Miniſters in our neighbouring Iſland; yea, verily, have we, and in this too; as bad as any Age hath produced. Is it Rebellion then to be on our Guard? Or is it Sedition to ſhew us our Danger? In Truth this ſeems to need Demonſtration; for we cannot take it on thy Word, without affronting more reſpectable Authority which we have rejected; the Authority of thy Maſters, made known unto us not long ſince by PROCLAMATION.

I do not well know, Friend JOSHUA, what to ſay to thy weak Attempt of rendering us indifferent about the Fate of thoſe Friends, who have ſuffered in their Fortunes for defending our Liberties; if there were any Danger of thy Succeſs in ſuch a Point, thou mayeſt ſucceed in any Thing. Thou knoweſt we owe them all we have; and that, had they failed us through paltry Fear or Avarice, we ſhould have nothing to call OUR OWN; the Sweat of our Brow, and the Care of our Fortunes, had been rendered fruitleſs, and the Yoke of thy Maſters clapt upon the Necks of our Poſterity. Thou wilt ſay, with all thy Heart; it may be ſo; for, if I conjecture right, thou haſt no Children, thou laboureſt not, but in Iniquity, for the Bread thou eateſt, nor careſt thou for any Thing beyond thine own Gratifications. But, I thank God, there be but few like thee; this People are, by Nature,

ture, generous and grateful; they cannot enjoy the Bleſſings which have been preſerved to them, until Reſtitution be made to the Preſervers; and, indeed, they were Fools could they expect Security while their Enemies hold Power, and their Friends are kept down in Diſgrace. Thou ſayeſt it is not a publick Concern whether DIONYSIUS be at *Dunmanway*, or *Cork*; thou mayeſt as well ſay, that it matters not to the People whether the Man called the P——TE be at the Head of the Church or the Tail of a Squadron; conſidered merely as Men, it may be true; but in both Propoſitions there is a Fallacy; for the one muſt be conſidered as an injured Champion of his Country, and the other as a Firebrand, who hath inflamed, and almoſt ruined, a deſerving, loyal People.

Do not charge, on DIONYSIUS or his Friends, the Diſtractions of this Nation, when even thy Conſcience muſt teſtify that we enjoyed the Sweets of Peace, until thy Maſters attempted to take from us the Source of all Enjoyment, SECURITY IN THE POSSESSION OF OUR PROPERTY; until they inſulted our Legiſlature, ſcreened our Defrauders, miſ-repreſented our Principles to our Prince, and laid the Rod of Power upon thoſe who ſtood up in our Defence. This, and much more, they did; this, and much more, they ſeem ſtill in a Capacity of doing, and we have no Room to doubt their Inclinations; hence hath ariſen the Flame thou complaineſt of; not a dangerous Flaſh of Licentiouſneſs, but a ſtrong and ſteady Glow of Liberty, univerſally, though ſlowly, kindled, and not to be extinguiſhed until the Fewel be removed; thou ſayeſt *Lemuel Gulliver* could piſs it out; verily, no, nor ANDREW ST——E to help him; for his Urine is inflammatory, and would but augment the Flame. Can thy Maſters walk ſafe through the Fire, like the three holy Men of old? Caution them not to try; for there is but little Hope of the Interpoſition of an Angel.

It ſeemeth ſtrange, that thou ſhouldſt be ſo warm againſt a Man whoſe Parts are ſo deſpicable in the Eyes of the Great Men thou ſerveſt, and whoſe Influence thou thinkeſt ſo ſmall among the People; it looketh ſuſpicious, as if neither were the Caſe, by thy Chain of laboured Abuſe, and the inceſſant Toils of thy Fellow-Servants; it rather hath the Appearance of his being feared than deſpiſed; feared, from his Ability in ſupporting a righteous Cauſe, and impreſſing its Merits on the Minds of his Fellow-Subjects; he hath ſaid Things that have touched certain galled Conſciences; no Wonder then that they ſhould wince, and give the Word to ſuch as thee to beſpatter whom they cannot confute.

Thou ſayeſt there is a Man come among us to promote Peace; verily, I am pleaſed to hear it; for Peace is much wanted; but

I ſhould

I ſhould be glad to hear it from better Authority. This Comfort I will give you, however; I will believe we ſhall have Peace, when I ſee the Proofs of it, and that is as much as thou canſt modeſtly expect; I doubt not the *Diſpoſition* of our new Ruler, and will *hope* the *beſt*, will not that ſuffice thee? What further doſt thou aſk from me? Shall I remit all Vigilance, and ſit down ſatisfied with *Hope*? Thee allows we have been wounded, and thee ſhould then have ſhewn how and when we have been cured; for I confeſs myſelf ignorant; if ſuch a Thing hath happened, I have been in a Dream; doth the coming in of a Phyſician work a Miracle for the Patient, or couldſt thou find thy Cure in the Sight of his Wig? If thou couldſt, thou art happy, and I envy thee. For me, I own I ſhould rather expect it from a Preſcription; but perhaps thee are tender of me, and would have me rid of uneaſy Apprehenſions; I thank thee; but I will, if thee pleaſe, bear them a little longer, ſince I have borne them ſo long; I have borne them theſe four Years, thanks to thy Maſters, and muſt be excuſed from dropping them till I can do it with Safety. Thou alloweſt the People ſhould judge from what they feel; I cloſe with thee; from what we feel we do judge both of what is paſt, and what may be to come.

It is convenient for thy Friends that thou ſhouldſt cry Peace, when there is no Peace: I grant thee if there were to be no Oppoſition there would be no Conteſt, and there would conſequently be Peace; but there are Seaſons, Friend JOSHUA, when ſuch a Peace would be Deſtruction, and our All dependeth on a reſolute Reſiſtance; thy Maſters were the Aggreſſors, it is one continued Conteſt, and they are anſwerable for all Efforts that may be made to re-eſtabliſh our antient Security. If thy Adverſary ſhould cry Peace to thee after plundering thy Effects, or maiming thy Perſon, what wouldſt thou anſwer to him? Thou talkeſt of healing Wounds; ſhew us one Step that hath been taken in ſo good a Work, and we will thank thee; in what Part hath the Oil been poured, or the Styptick applied? Canſt thou heal a Wound without cleanſing the Sore? Verily, if thou wouldſt attempt it, thou art a bad Chirurgeon, and thou wilt meet but few, among this People, who will adopt thy Method of Cure.

Ceaſe then, Friend JOSHUA, to plague thyſelf with thy preſent Scheme; thy Jokes are flat, thy Stile inſipid, and thy Doctrines both rotten and threadbare; they have been four Years in Uſe, and have been ſo often taken up by a Variety of Succeſſors, that the People are wearied with laughing at them. Thou wilt ſay there are none other to be had, and that thee are under a Neceſſity of writing; go on then i' God's Name, and make the moſt of them; vary thy Stile, and thy Manner of Addreſs, and look

as new as thee can; it is incumbent on thee to recommend thy Wit; for thou wilt never have Opportunity of exerting again the Talent of a Spy; every Quarter, but the one you are in, is barred against you; and even there, if thou art not active, thou mayest compleat the Measure of thy Expulsions. Thou hast, however, there some Employment for thy Humour, which may secure thee for a Time, if thee be industrious; there are Vices which thee may help to palliate, Rancour which thee may feed, and a Conscience which may be obliged to thee for diverting it from Self-Attention.

I know thee will boast that I have mistaken thee; it may be so, for I have at present no Opportunity of being informed; but be that as it may, thee will be sure to say so; but this is of little Moment; the Public, I doubt not, knoweth thee, though thou braggest of thy Disguise; if I am right, what I have said is at thy Service; if not, thee may hand it to him it is meant for, for I am sure thee knows him; ye are of a Gang, but it is too small to lie concealed in, for there are but few who would inlist in it. Thou wilt say too that I am DIONYSIUS, and that I have spoken in my own Praise; but as to this he is secure, for it is known that he encountreth not such Adversaries; yea, weak as my Talent is, I am ashamed of it; nor have I done it from any Opinion of its being necessary, but purely to amuse myself with thy Folly.

My Wife calleth me to Supper, so I shall bid thee farewel; when I have nothing else to do, thee may hear from me again; be not puffed at what I say; what I may write is for thy Masters, not for thee; thou wilt stand but as a Cypher to direct my Letter to; thou wilt be glad to be employed at any Rate; thou shalst carry them my Thoughts, and mayst then report to me the contemptuous Leer they receive them with; thus my Words may furnish fresh Matter for thy Jests, and procure thee an Addition of Favour with thy MITRED PATRON. For all this wilt thou not call me thy Friend? Do not, for I am neither thine nor his; he hath nearly brought my Country to Ruin, and thou wouldst lend thy weak Assistance to court us to yield to his Dominion. I pray that God may discomfit ye in this World, and forgive ye in the next. *Amen.*

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